

An abstract painting featuring thick, expressive brushstrokes in various shades of brown, from light tan to dark chocolate and near-black tones. The strokes are layered and textured, creating a sense of depth and movement. The background is a mix of white and light brown, with the darker colors dominating the right and bottom portions of the frame.

The Rita Blitt Collection

at the
KU Edwards
Campus

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foreward

Through her painting and her words, *"Kindness is contagious. Catch it!"* Rita Blitt's work inspires others to embrace joy and kindness. Her collections encourage meditation, creative thinking and connection that complement the culture and focus of our institution, where we strive to enrich students' lives through education. Rita's generous donations, featured in this book, feel like they were always destined for this campus.

As a Kansas City native, Rita has been involved throughout the process of selecting and hanging her work on our campus. So many of her paintings invite us to think about the process by which they were made: the weight of the strokes, the type of paint used, the colors she chose and the way those colors hit the canvas in streaks, bubbles or splatters. It's not about the finished product, but the journey she took to get there.

That same kind of journey is also a fundamental part of the education process at the KU Edwards Campus. Students come to us hoping to learn new skills, gain new connections and further their careers. As educators, we guide them through the steps of achieving the goals they set for themselves. When a student graduates from our campus, it means more than just a diploma in their hand. The journey they took matters just as much.

Rita's gift has turned our campus' blank canvas into a space that generates a sense of welcome, warmth and enthusiasm. I hope you enjoy the collections of her sculpture and artwork displayed throughout the KU Edwards Campus. We are so grateful to Rita for her generosity, to Misty Chandler for her work on this project and to Carol and Fred Logan for their leadership gift, as well as the other donors who have supported this collection.

about Rita

Rita Blitt is an international award-winning painter, sculptor and filmmaker whose words *"Kindness is contagious. Catch it!"* have inspired people all over the world.

Her works are included in many museums and private collections, including: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, John F. Kennedy Library, National Museum of Singapore, Spencer Museum of Art, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Nevada Museum of Art, Spertus Institute, Skirball Cultural Center, Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art, Kennedy Museum of American Art and the Mulvane Art Museum. Her monumental sculpture can be found in Australia, Israel, Japan, Singapore and the United States.



The Rita Blitt Gallery and Sculpture Garden, Mulvane Museum, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas is the home of the Rita Blitt Legacy Collection. Rita was conferred an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Washburn University in 2019.

Blitt's work celebrates love of life, nature, music and dance. In 1977, she wrote *"I feel like I'm dancing on paper."*

She is pleased to donate these works from her personal collection, in order to share her joy and love of creating.

why KU Edwards Campus?

You've given a lot of your work to public institutions. What powered that decision?

I have great satisfaction in giving to not-for-profits that have blank walls. I created these works with joy in my heart and am happy to have the opportunity to share my positive feelings with others. It's an honor. People frequently have said to me, "Your art makes me feel so good."

How did you choose the KU Edwards Campus as one of the places you wanted to donate your work?

I love learning and being surrounded by the pursuit of knowledge. Edwards is a perfect place for me to share my art with people discovering their own way to make a contribution towards a better world. I am hoping that as my works dance on the walls, that the viewers of the Edwards community will know that I am sending love and best wishes.

You're known for using both hands when you paint. What led you to develop that technique?

In the '70s, I was creating spontaneous drawings with my right hand, and I suppose there was music in the background. I unconsciously picked up two Conté crayons and started using two at once. I was quite shocked, thrilled, embarrassed. I wrote in the lower right-hand corner, 'two hands.'

My drawings were interrupted by my work on a monumental sculpture and when I got back to drawing, I began drawing with one hand. It didn't feel right. I needed two hands to feel honest, to feel whole. After a while, I wondered why I was drawing with two hands, so I sat down to write. That's when I said 'I feel like I'm dancing on paper.'

That was in 1977 when I was making my dancing lines with Conté crayon or ink, but it wasn't until 1995 that I wondered if I could paint on canvas with two hands at once. I put the paint on my brush, made my initial strokes and then I peeked. Then I put more paint on my brush and continued painting, repeating this process over and over until I was satisfied with my results.

Who are some of the artists that inspire you, and how have they informed your work?

I find Picasso's work very bold and courageous. I also admire Matisse's spontaneous lines when dealing with real subject matter. It wasn't until 2000 that I challenged myself to create subjectively and objectively at the same time. It was briefly satisfying, and perhaps it will challenge me again some day.

How would you like Edwards Campus faculty, staff, students and visitors to engage with your work when they see it on our walls?

To trust their inner voice. Many years ago, my husband said to me that the viewer has to be as creative in viewing your works as you are in creating them. I would like for people to enjoy viewing my works in their own way and to feel them.



“Rita has actively explored art since she was a child— from the personal cards and messages for her family to the spontaneous marks that dance across miles of paper to the monumental sculptures that define neighborhoods and communities around the world. The inclusion of her work on the KU Edwards Campus ensures that her spirit and legacy are shared and will inspire students, faculty, art lovers and artists for many years to come.”
– Connie Gibbons, Mulvane Art Museum

“What makes an artist honest? For Rita Blitt, it’s her expression of feelings – immediately and with her ongoing personal commitment in action. Her work is inspired by freedom of creativity, capturing a moment, harnessing a feeling, and expressing it through gestural lines. Art emerges from her own sense of the here and now. Rita’s love of music and dance is inseparable from her dedication to painting, drawing and sculpture. Often inspired by music or dancing shapes, Rita creates spontaneously to capture the feeling evoked by each song or dancer’s pose and create an abstract visual interpretation.”

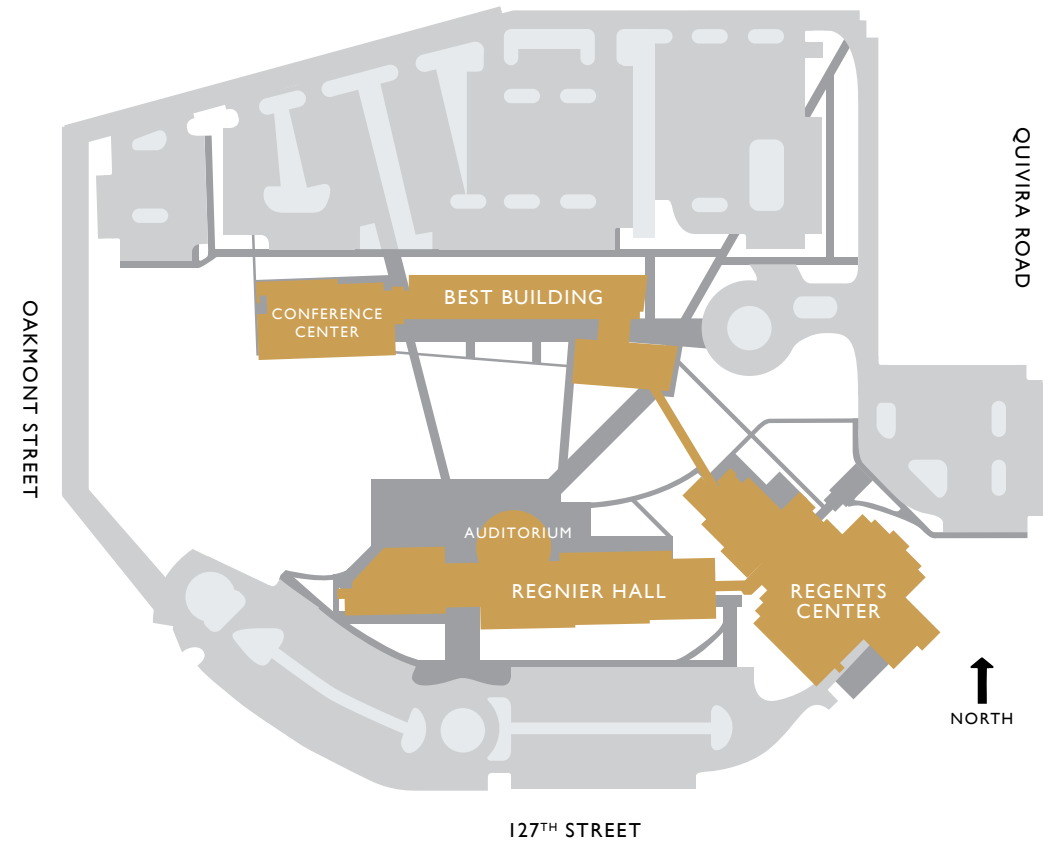
– Saralyn Reece Hardy, Marilyn Stokstad Director,
Spencer Museum of Art

“The art of Rita Blitt inspires and energizes! We’re pleased to support the presentation of her work and hope that it will enhance the experience of learning and community engagement at the KU Edwards Campus.”
– Carol & Fred Logan, Rita Blitt Collection Leadership Donors

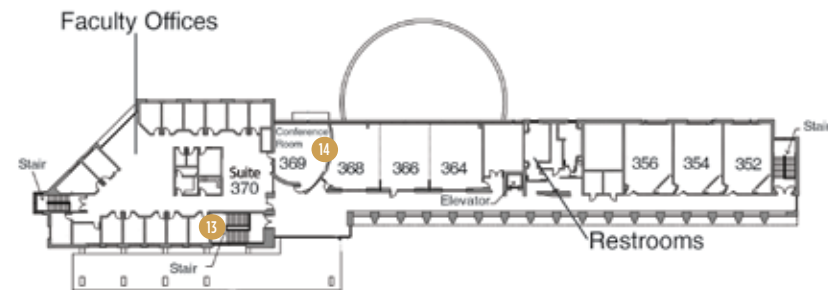
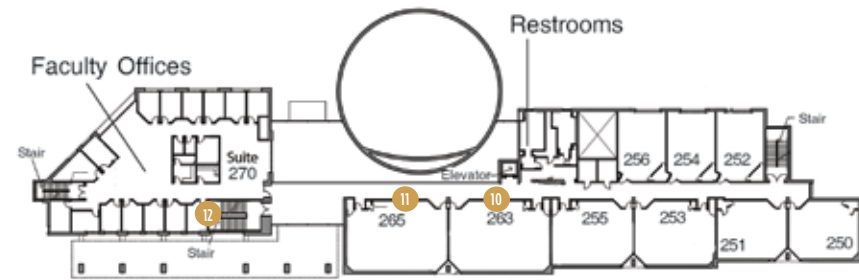
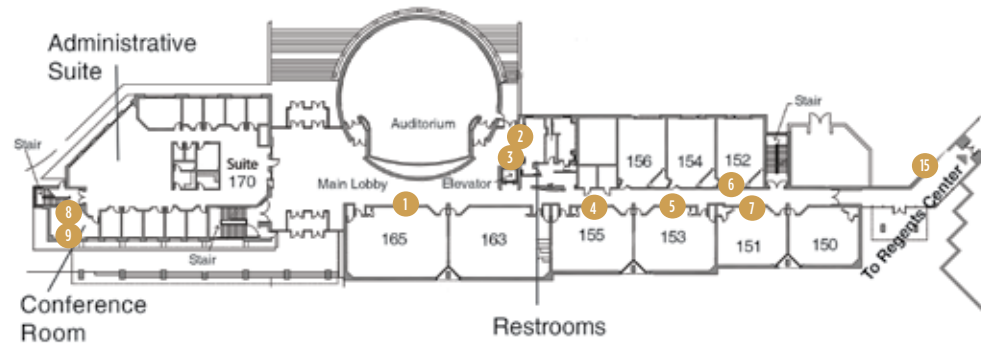
KU Edwards Campus collection



campus map



Regnier Hall



1 *Feeling the Rhythm I - VI*
2018, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



2018.0048



2018.0049



2018.0050



2018.0043



2018.0042



2018.0044

2 *Scherzo*

1998, acrylic on canvas
72" x 72"



1998.0057

3 *Celestial Voices*

2014, acrylic on canvas
50" x 66"



2014.0058

4 *Aspen Dance I - V*
2015, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



2015.0080



2015.0082



2015.0078



2015.0079



2015.0083

5 *Tango I - VI*
2010, acrylic on paper
14" x 17" each



2010.149



2010.148



2010.143



2010.0151



2010.145



2010.153

6 *Hip-Hop I - III*

2010, acrylic on paper
14" x 17" each



2010.146



2010.155



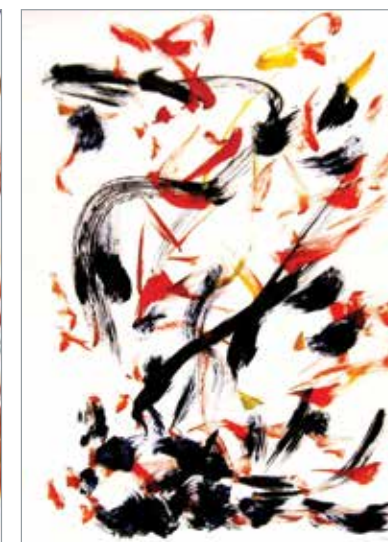
2010.156

7 *Windy Spirit I - III*

1995-1996, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1996.0130



1995.0077



1995.0078

8 *Gratitude*

2013, acrylic on canvas

48" x 60"

Not on public tour; please request special access.



2013.0073

9 *Fire Dance and Life Force VII - VIII*

2001, 2004, acrylic on canvas

24" x 24" each

Not on public tour; please request special access.



2001.0079

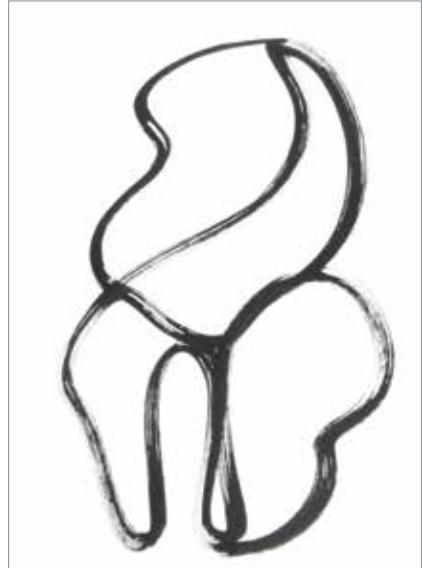


2014.0045

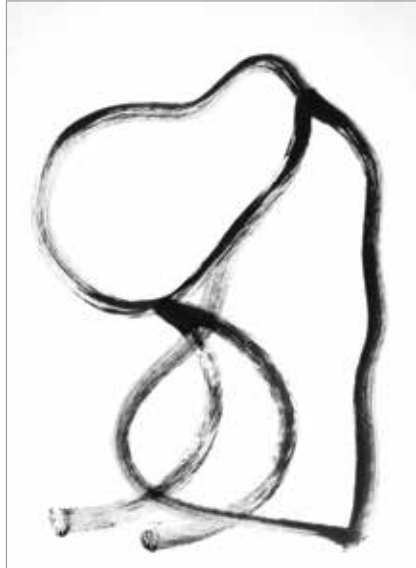


2014.0046

10 *Feeling Form I - III*
1998, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1998.0236



1998.0237



1998.0232

11 *Lyrical Flight I - III*
2004, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



2004.0014



2004.0016



2004.0021

12 *Ecstasy*

1996, acrylic on canvas
50" x 68"



1996.0321

13 *Musette I*

1998, acrylic on canvas
65" x 53"



1998.0095

14 *Seeing the World Clearly*

2001, acrylic on canvas

30" x 40"

Not on public tour; please request special access.



2001.0060

15 *Springtime Ecstasy*

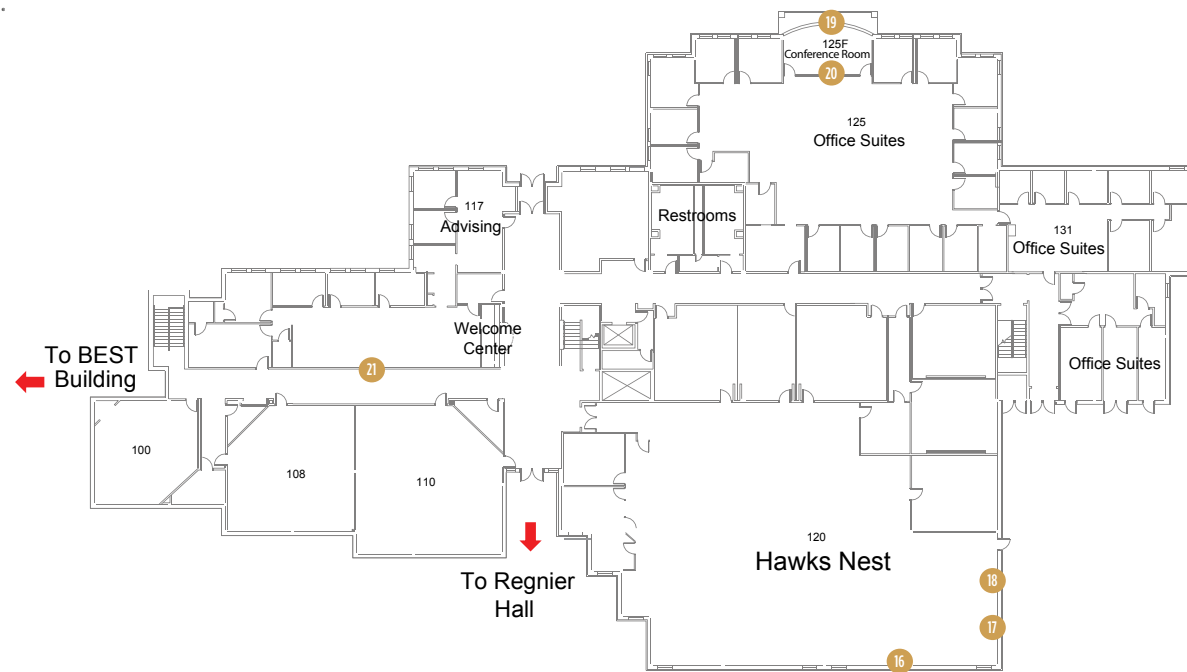
2001, acrylic on canvas

30" x 40"

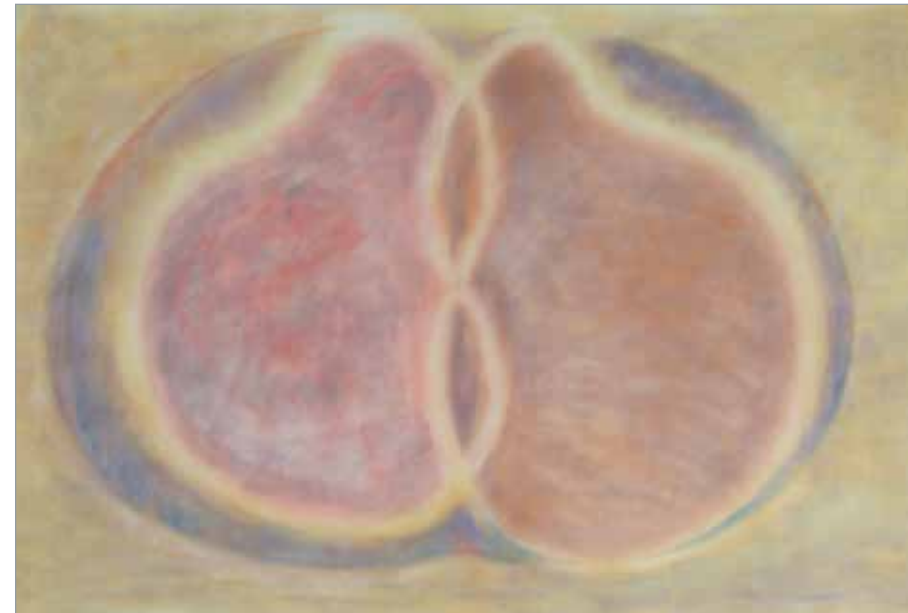


2001.0062

Regents Center



16 *Joining Forces*
1981, pastel on paper
40" x 60"



1981.0046

17 *Reflections of Nature*

1981, pastel on paper
40" x 60"



1981.0044

18 *Hidden in Kansas Landscape*

1981, pastel on paper
40" x 60"



1981.0044

19 *The Dance I - XV*

1995, acrylic on canvas

5" x 5" each

Not on public tour; please request special access.



1995.0441 - 1995.0455

See cover for detail.

20 *A Lyrical Moment*

2012, ink and acrylic on paper

30" x 44"

Not on public tour; please request special access.



2012.0233

21 *Morning Joy I - VIII*
1990-1992, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1990.0231



1992.0067



1990.0224



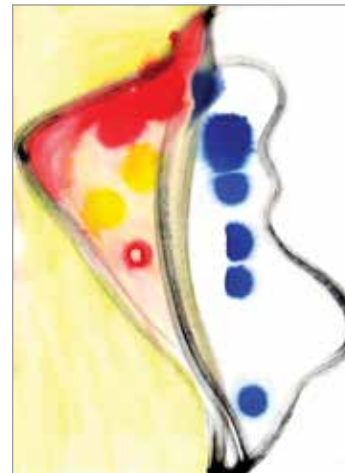
1990.0225



1992.0177



1992.0011



1990.0142



1990.0062

BEST Building



22 *Feeling Form IV - IX*
1988-1989, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1988.0134



1989.0209



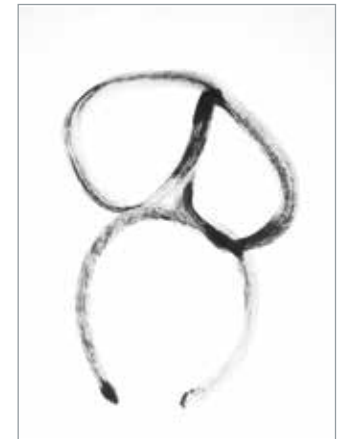
1988.0242



1988.0233



1988.0234



1988.0235

23 *Contrapuntal*
1995, oil on canvas
70" x 54"



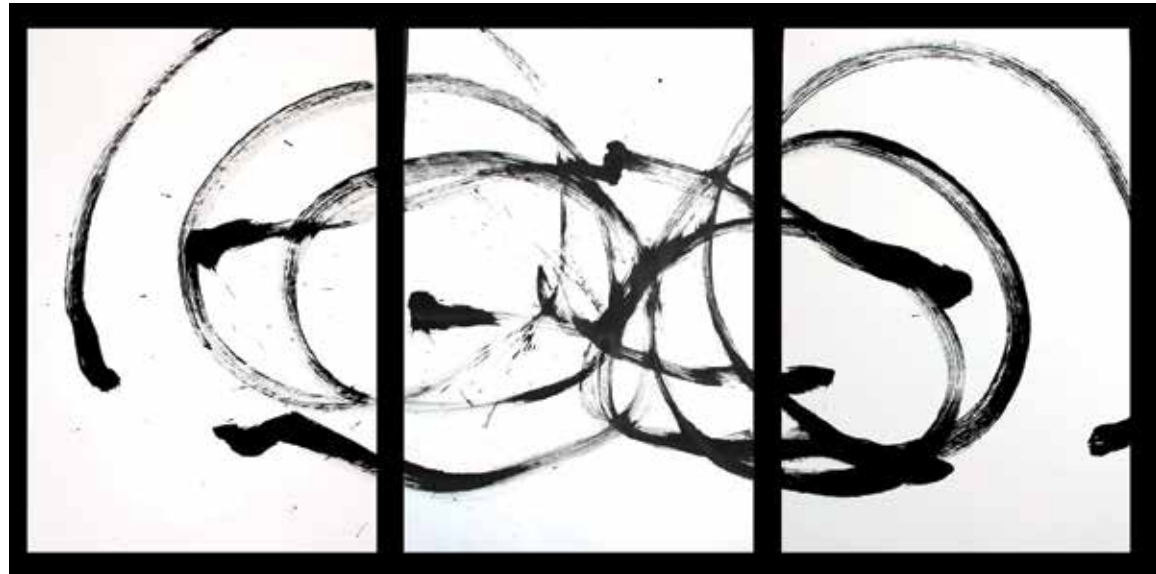
1995.0382

24 *In the Moment II*
1997, acrylic on paper
22" x 30"



1997.0372

25 *Feeling My Way*
1991, acrylic on paper
30" x 66"



1991.0151

26 *Dancing in the Wind I - III*
2005, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



2005.0005



2005.0008



2005.0007

27 *Samba I - V*
1993, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1993.0191



1993.0346



1993.0222



1993.0223



1993.0224

28 *Abyss of Time I - V*
2012, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



2012.0098



2012.0099



2012.0104



2012.0106



2012.0107

29 *December*

1998, acrylic on canvas
48" x 60"



1998.0096

30 *Passion*

1998, acrylic on canvas
48" x 60"



1998.0072

31 *Exploring*

2009, acrylic on canvas
48" x 56"



2009.0073

32 *Dancing I - II*

1993, acrylic on paper
30" x 22" each



1993.0087



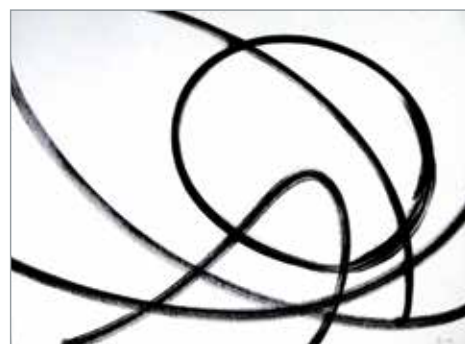
1993.0088

33 *Exploring the Edge I - III*

1989, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



1989.0220



1989.0223



1989.0225

34 *Together*

1983, acrylic on canvas on masonite
47" x 34"



1983.0001

35 *Deep into Nature*

1986, acrylic gel and found objects on Masonite
41" x 36"



1986.0058

36 *Evening Song*

2018, acrylic on canvas
25" x 72"



2018.0038

37 *Cherish and Share*
2002, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



2002.0234



2002.0300

38 *Feeling the Rhythm VII - IX*
1997, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



1997.0336



1997.0333



1997.0335

39 *Dancing in the Wind V - VI*

1993, 1997, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



1996.0358



1997.0337

40 *Chi and Dancing in the Wind IV*

1997, acrylic on paper
22" x 30" each



1997.0342



1997.0340

about KU Edwards Campus

The KU Edwards Campus provides high-quality education programs, lifelong learning opportunities and entrepreneurial initiatives designed to serve the diverse workforce, economic and community needs of Kansas City and beyond. Located in Overland Park, the Edwards Campus opened in 1993, and is named for KU alumni Roy and Joan Edwards. The 30-acre campus comprises four major buildings totaling 235,000 square feet.

KU Edwards Campus programs serve adults with busy professional and personal lives, offering flexible class schedules structured around students' needs. Graduates go on to enter or advance in a variety of fields, including business, public service, engineering, education, science and more.

The campus offers over 50 undergraduate and graduate

programs and certificates, with more than 2,000 students currently enrolled. KU Edwards Campus is also home to KU Professional & Continuing Education, which serves more than 25,000 people per year on the campus, across the Kansas City metro, the state of Kansas and the globe.



thank you



Your support helps students and professionals pursue the next step in their education, advance their careers and bolster the Kansas City area economy and workforce. Visit kuendowment.org to learn more about giving to the KU Edwards Campus and how you can support other programs at the University of Kansas.

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Book design and layout by Lindy Rhodes



KU EDWARDS
CAMPUS

The University of Kansas